

## OFFICE OF BUSINESS DIVERSITY AND OPPORTUNITY

# STRATEGIC PLAN

### VISION

Develop and promote a thriving small business ecosystem by fostering innovation and supporting women and minority business growth.

### MISSION

Make Birmingham a hub for women and minority businesses through improving government policies and processes.

### STRATEGIC GOALS



#### FILLING NEEDS IN THE ECOSYSTEM

Out of the 50 largest metros in the country, Birmingham has the 2nd lowest rate of technical assistance provision to firms. The OBDO seeks to change that.



#### IMPROVING GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Slow, opaque, and burdensome City processes and policies are costing business owners time and money and limiting their ability to grow. The OBDO will work across departments to re-engineer city services and procurement processes. OBDO will also help to facilitate an ecosystem to grow women and minority businesses while increasing transparency.



#### FINDING PURPOSE IN PLACE

The OBDO will engage in place-based development to activate commercial corridors (North Birmingham, Five Points West, Ensley, 4th Avenue Business District) through designing suites of resources to help small businesses thrive.

### OBJECTIVE

- 1) Conduct an annual Small Business Survey to understand the needs of small businesses in Birmingham.
- 2) Launch micro-grant program to support technical assistance, marketing enhancement and facility improvements for small businesses.
- 3) Forge partnerships through BOLD and other programs with local and national small business support organizations to fill gaps in technical assistance around business sustainability and growth.
- 4) Support the creation or recruitment of a minority accelerator able to grow at least 300 new business over 5 years.
- 5) Elevate and promote inclusive procurement and supplier diversity programs throughout the region.

### OBJECTIVE

- 1) Provide policy recommendations to streamline, improve and automate services such as licensing, permits, and tax payments.
- 2) Create an inclusive procurement program to connect women and minority businesses to City projects through forming a procurement advisory and inclusion taskforce to ensure enterprise-wide advancements, spend reports and training programs.
- 3) Commence and support a disparity study to ensure procurement practices are fair and just.
- 4) Build the data infrastructure needed for reporting and ongoing data collection.

### OBJECTIVE

- 1) Implement place-based policy programs like a rent subsidy program to address access to capital gaps and incentivize activity in underinvested in commercial corridors.
- 2) Celebrate small businesses by spotlighting their unique contributions to our communities and increase awareness of their importance in the economy.
- 3) Support, protect and promote legacy businesses who have contributed significantly to the fabric of our city but may be in jeopardy of not being able to thrive in the midst of the city's growth.